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CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 18 OF THE CONVENTION

Third periodic reports of States parties

THE PHILIPPINES*

* For the initial report submitted by the Government of the Philippines, see CEDAW/C/5/Add.6; for its consideration by the Committee, see CEDAW/C/SR.32, CEDAW/C/SR.33, CEDAW/C/SR.36 and CEDAW/C/SR.37, and Official Records of the General Assembly, thirty-ninth session Supplement No. 45 (A/39/45), paras. 69-124, for the second periodic report submitted by the Government of the Philippines, see CEDAW/C/13/Add.17 and CEDAW/C/13/Add.17/Amend.1; for its consideration by the Committee, see CEDAW/C/SR.179, and Official Records of the General Assembly, forty-sixth session Supplement No.38 (A/46/38), paras 199-223.

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GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Imune Deficiency Syndrome
AIR	Anti-Illegal Recruitment
APDC	Asian and Pacific Development Centre
ARBs	Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries
BAI	Bureau of Plant Industry
BI	Bureau of Immigration
BOS	Basic Orientation Seminar
BRW	Bureau of Rural Workers
BWSA	Barangay Waterworks and Sanitation Association
BWYW	Bureau of Women and Young Workers
CALF	Comprehensive Agricultural Loan Fund
CAR	Cordillera Autonomous Region
CARP	Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program
CBBEs	Countryside and Barangay Business Enterprises
CFO	Commission on Filipinos Overseas
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CMP	Community Mortgage Program
CSC	Civil Service Commission
DA	Department of Agriculture
DECS	Department of Education, Culture and Sports
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DOH	Department of Health
DOJ	Department of Justice

DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment
DOT	Department of Tourism
DPWH	Department of Public Works and Highways
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EDT	Entrepreneurship Development Training
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
EQUADS	Equality Advocates
FP	Focal Point
GABRIELA	General Assembly Binding Women for Reforms, Integrity, Equality, Leadership and Action
GOs	Government Organizations
GO-NGO	Government Organization - NonGovernment Organization
GSIS	Government Service Insurance System
LEBC	Legislative-Executive Bases Council
LFPR	Labor Force Participation Rate
LGC	Local Government Code
LWUA	Local Water Utilities Administration
MCRA	Married Couples of Reproductive Age
MEDICARE	Medical Care
MTPDP	Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan
NCRFW	National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women
NEDA	National Economic and Development Authority
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
NHMFC	National Housing Mortgage Finance Corporation
NMYC	National Manpower and Youth Council
NSO	National Statistics Office

NSCB	National Statistical Coordination Board
OWWA	Overseas Workers Welfare Administration
PDOE	Pre-Deployment Orientation Program for Entertainers
PDPW	Philippine Development Plan for Women
POEA	Philippine Overseas Employment Administration
POs	People's Organizations
PSDP	Philippine Statistical Development Plan
RA	Republic Act
R & R	Rest and Recreation
SOLWODI	Solidarity of Women in Distress
SSS	Social Security System
US	United States
WAGAS	Women Advancing Government Action for Shelter
WEDPRO	Women's Education, Development, Productivity, Research Organization
WEED	Women Workers Employment and Entrepreneurship Development
WID	Women in Development
WIDTOP	Women in Development Training and Orientation Program
WIMBASE	Establishment of Statistical Base on Women Migrant Workers (Focusing on Domestic Helpers)
WINT	Women in Non-traditional Trades
WOWDI	Women Workers Development Institute

UN CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

Third Periodic Report

PHILIPPINES

November 1992

PART ONE

A. INTRODUCTION

1. This Third Philippine Report on the implementation of the provisions of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women covers the period 1988 to November 1992. It includes the highlights of developments in each area of concern of the Convention.

2. The report consists of two main parts. The first provides information on the current socio-economic and political situation in the country including the latest data to highlight the present status of women. This provides the backdrop for the consideration of the developments on each article of the Convention.

3. The second part provides specific information relating to Articles 2 to 16 of the Convention.

4. This report focuses on new policies and programs resulting from the growing consciousness of women's issues in the country. Of particular significance was the formulation of the first Philippine Development Plan for Women, 1989-1992. All these developments, notwithstanding, some sectors still believe that while legal and policy pronouncements may already be adequate to a certain degree, bridging the gap between theory and practice demands more urgent attention.

B. GENERAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PHILIPPINES AND IN THE STATUS OF WOMEN

B.1 Information Updates on the Philippines

5. The 1990 Census of Population and Housing placed the total population of the Philippines at 60.7 million, a 26.2 percent increase from the 1980 figure of 48.1 million. 1/

6. Population growth rate in 1989 was estimated at 2.46 percent. Compared with other countries, this growth rate was found to be higher than that of Asia (1.6%), Southeast Asia (1.9%) and the world (1.6%). The country's high population growth rate may be attributed to the gradually declining but persistently high birth rate and the moderate gains in mortality decline.

7. The country's population remains relatively young with the 0-14 age group comprising 39.5 percent of the total population.

8. The urban-rural distribution shows that while the country is still predominantly rural, the level of urbanization is gradually rising from 40.4 in 1986 to 42.4 in 1989.

9. While the Philippines is a country rich in natural resources, the country is yet to successfully maximize the potentials of both its natural and human resources for sustained economic growth. Poverty, unemployment and underemployment, environmental degradation are just among the problems that continue to beset the country.

10. Environmental degradation is one of the major problems that the country is facing. Its forests are fast disappearing, water systems are dying from pollutants, and industrial wastes are continually polluting the air. The government has, therefore, put this as a top concern in its agenda.

Political Developments

11. Under the Aquino administration, the country underwent a difficult transition from dictatorship to democracy. In 1988 and 1992, local and national elections were held, respectively. The latter successfully transfered the presidency to a successor president, who, being the administration candidate, is expected to continue with the general policy thrusts started by the previous administration.

1/ Unless otherwise indicated, the source of data in Part 1 of this report is the Statistical Brochure on Filipino Women, a National Statistics Office and National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women publication, 1992.

12. The decentralization thrust of the Aquino administration which involved the strengthening of regional and local government units was capped by the passing into law of Republic Act 7160 or the Local Government Code. The Code widens the taxing powers and tax benefits of Local Government Units (LGUs) and has authorized the devolution to said LGUs of certain powers hitherto exercised by the national government such as those relating to public works, agriculture, health and social welfare. The Code also minimizes to a great extent the dependency of LGUs upon the central government and challenges local officials' creativity in initiating projects that will result in the attainment of developmental and employment goals.

Social Developments

13. Estimates of the incidence of poverty between 1985 and 1988 declined from 59.3 percent to 49.5 percent.[2/] Despite this marked percentage point decline, however, about half of the population or 5.3 million families continue to live without the basic necessities of life.[2/]

14. Distribution of income remains to be highly skewed. Families at the bottom 30 percent of the income ladder continued to account for a meager 9.3 percent of total income while the share of the richest 10 percent of families dropped from 36.4 percent in 1985 to 35.7 percent in 1988.[3/]

15. The labor force participation rate was estimated at 66.1 percent in 1989. Unemployment rate fell from 11.1 percent in 1985 to 9.2 percent in 1989.

16. Underemployment remains a problem despite decreases in underemployment rates from 35.6 percent in 1986 to 31.2 percent in 1989. As of 1989, there were about 6.8 million people in need of productive full-time employment. The problem is more pronounced in the rural areas where the underemployment rate of 39.2 percent, much higher than the 17.2 percent in the urban areas, is reflective of the high rate of underutilization of productive labor, particularly of women, and the prevalence of part-time and seasonal employment.

17. The estimated life expectancy at birth, an indication of the overall level of health, rose from 63.6 in 1980 to 64.6 in 1990.

18. Overall mortality on the other hand, as measured by the crude death rate was estimated to have declined from 7.7 in 1960 to 5.4 per thousand population in 1989.

2/ Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan, 1987-1992

3/ Situation of Women and Children, NEDA and UNICEF, 1989

19. The morbidity and mortality situation is typical of less developed country where communicable diseases remain to be the leading causes of illness and death. Water borne diseases remain to be a significant health problem in the country.

The Economic Environment

20. The developments over the 1986 - 1992 period show that in spite of the gains made in reviving the democratic processes in the country, the economy has yet to recover the peak per capita real GNP level it attained in 1982 of ₱12,725. Analysis of the country's economic performance shows that the main sources of the country's inability to sustain high growth have been the following: (i) heavy debt servicing; (ii) the relative slow pace of development of the export sector; (iii) the heavy import dependence of local industries; and (iv) inadequate inflow of foreign investments. (MTPDP, 1993-1998)

21. Related to the inadequate inflow of investments had been the series of de-stabilization or coup d'etat attempts which drove away prospective investors who were about ready to come in.

22. While the Philippine economy is interdependent with the international market and therefore, is very much affected by the international recession, it is realized that the macropolicies characterizing the development model to which the government subscribes to have yet to successfully make a difference in the lives of the majority of the population, especially those in marginal situations.

23. As if the country's economic difficulties were not enough, the country during the period in focus, suffered from a number of natural calamities such as a major volcanic eruption which is still ongoing. To date, approximately 1.2 million individuals have been affected/displaced and are under the care of concerned government agencies in resettlement areas. Total damage has been estimated at ₱10,625 billion.

24. In July 1990, a strong earthquake rocked the Northern part of the country including the metropolitan Manila area. Baguio City which is the summer capital of the country and is a big tourist attraction was almost levelled to the ground. Hotel buildings, school houses and residential houses were destroyed. Underground communication cables were likewise wrecked. Total damage was estimated at ₱12.225 billion.

25. Several strong typhoons also hit the country. In 1991, one of these strong typhoons caused a catastrophic flooding in the southern city of Ormoc, killing an estimated 5,101 persons and rendering some 5,232 families homeless. This catastrophy called attention to the very sad state of the country's environment in terms of denuded forest cover.

26. The year 1991, also saw the pull-out from the country of major US military bases. Although this was the result of a landmark decision reached by the Philippine Senate and was popularly supported by the people, this event significantly affected the businesses operating in the area as well as a big number of Filipino workers in the military bases. The present administration is currently in its initial stage toward converting the base facilities into an industrial and tourism zone.

27. Under these generally difficult conditions which have been briefly described above, women and children, especially from the affected and depressed areas, are most vulnerable in terms of opportunities for survival and development.

B.2 Information Updates on the Status of Women

28. As of the 1990 Census of Population and Housing, the total number of women was 30.2 million. They comprise 49.7 percent of the total Philippine population.

29. Of the total number of women in 1990, 38.9 percent belong to the 0-14 age group; 46.1 percent to the 15-44 age group; 3.7 percent and 11.2 percent belong to the 45-49 and 50+ age groups, respectively.

30. Although improvements in the health and education status of women have been noted in recent years, much remains to be done in terms of putting the concerns of women in the mainstream of development processes. Moreover, women's special concerns such as violence against women, prostitution, women's image in media, and problems of women migrant workers are in need of priority attention.

31. In general, there has been a slow but progressive decline in the total fertility rate for all women in the reproductive age groups. Total fertility rate was estimated at 4.12 in 1989, a decrease from the 1986 level of 4.32. In a span of over two decades (1965-1988), data show a reduction of two births per woman (from 6 children to 4).

32. Female life expectancy improved from 65.2 years in 1986 to 66.1 years and 66.4 years in 1989 and 1990, respectively. Women outlive the men on the average by four years.

33. Women, particularly mothers remain to be one of the worst affected groups of primary malnutrition problems. Surveys done by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute indicated a very high incidence of goiter among pregnant (30.%) and lactating (16.3%) women, much higher than the national level (3.5%).

34. The labor force participation rate of women from 1975 to 1990 was generally lower than that of men. However, the rate has been steadily increasing from 40.4 percent in 1975 to 42 percent in 1980, then abruptly increased to 47.3 percent in 1985 and to 47.5 in 1990. The economic crisis in 1985 might explain the high participation rate of women during that year.

35. Employed women comprised 36.9 percent of total employed in all industries in the first quarter of 1992. Employed women dominate three major industry groups, namely: wholesale and retail (67.2%); community, social and personal services (56.2%); and manufacturing (46.4%). Majority of sales, professional and technical, service and clerical workers are women. Managerial positions in these fields of work, however, are dominated by men.

B.3 Major Policy and Program Developments

36. As a signatory to the Convention, the Philippines continues to undertake policy measures and programs to attain full development for women in law and in practice. Achievements along this line as stated in the Second Periodic Report are being sustained and new initiatives are continuously being explored amidst the country's limitations and other socio-economic problems. The most recent developments are briefly described in the succeeding paragraphs.

The Philippine Development Plan for Women, 1989-1992

37. The approval and adoption of the Philippine Development Plan for Women, 1989-1992 (PDPW) is probably the most significant development in the efforts to advance women's situation in the Philippines. The PDPW is a companion to the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP). It was a result of some two years of consultation between and among women and men as individuals or as members of the various government and nongovernment organizations in the country.

38. The PDPW was approved by virtue of Executive Order 348 signed by President Aquino on February 17, 1989. At present, the extent of implementation of the PDPW varies among agencies. Some are in the process of setting up institutional mechanisms to ensure implementation while others are already into implementation of programs and projects.

39. A first progress report on WID-related activities since the PDPW adoption in 1989 has been prepared. A review of these activities reveal four categories of events or developments which took place between March 1989 to early 1990, to wit:

39.a Establishment of structures or mechanisms for PDPW. Included in this category was the establishment of 11 WID focal points and initiation of 27 others in the various government agencies. (An established focal point has an identified contact person.)

39.b Strengthening existing structures or mechanisms. Examples of existing structures for women are the Bureau of Women and Young Workers of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the Bureau of Women's Welfare of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). Strengthening of these bureaus involved the expansion of their activities and concerns from their traditional programs/projects to include the wider concerns of the Focal Points in terms of influencing the agency's total programs. Another example was the increase in the number of frontline officers dealing with woman clientele in such agencies as the Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration and DSWD.

39.c Institutionalizing gender-responsive planning and program implementation in government. Some of the significant moves along gender-responsive planning include the following:

1) NCRFW membership in the 13 Technical Subcommittees of Development Planning, the sub-cabinet level committees responsible for directing and coordinating national development planning in the Philippines.

2) Introduction of WID statements in the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP). These policy statements were culled out from the different PDPW chapters and incorporated into the corresponding chapters of the MTPDP.

3) Pilot-testing PDPW implementation in one region to determine approaches to PDPW implementation, monitoring, assessment and updating in the 14 geographical regions of the country.

4) Annual Cabinet meeting on women and bi-annual NCRFW Board meeting with the President to report on implementation of policies, programs and projects for women. The first Cabinet meeting on women where the Cabinet Secretaries reported to the President was held on March 4, 1992.

Advocacy and Gender-Consciousness Raising Programs

40. The most pervasive issue being confronted by the NCRFW in its work for women's advancement is the generally low level of consciousness of women's issues in all levels of the bureaucracy. For this purpose, the NCRFW embarked on a massive consciousness raising program entitled "NCRFW-CIDA Institutional Strengthening Project". Under financial assistance from the Canadian International Development Agency, the targets of this training are the different layers of the bureaucracy from the secretaries and undersecretaries down to the planners, trainors, and other decision-makers.

Development of a Data-Base on Women

41. A critical element in monitoring women's status is a gender-responsive data base. As early as 1987, an inter-agency statistics committee was formed under the leadership of the NCRFW to identify situations, problems and issues related to generation and processing of sex-disaggregated statistics. A Technical Working Group was formed to formulate a proposal for the establishment of a data base on women. The first activity under this proposal was the conduct of a workshop for the development of indicators for monitoring women's situation. The initial set of indicators is being refined with a group of experts.

42. It is to be noted that as a result of the above initiative, the members of the Technical Working Group on Statistics who represent major data producing agencies such as the Department of Agriculture, Education, Health, Labor, the National Statistical Coordination Board and the National Statistics Office have also done a lot of advocacy in their respective departments towards the generation of sex-based data.

43. Another related development is NCRFW's participation in the various committees in charge of formulating the 1993-1998 Philippine Statistical Development Plan, the basic document which guides the generation of statistics in the country.

44. Being eagerly awaited by both GOs & NGOs is the output of a project which the NCRFW commissioned the National Statistics Office (NSO) to undertake, namely, the production of a Compendium of Statistics on Women & Men in the Philippines. This project entailed the re-processing of available data to highlight the differential situation of women and men in various sectors. The publication which includes, aside from the statistical tables, a popularized form of analysis for wider readership, is scheduled to be completed by the end of 1992.

GO-NGO Collaboration

45. The PDPW has catalyzed a more dynamic GO-NGO collaboration. While it is basically a government program, some NGOs have pledged support to PDPW implementation and a number of them have incorporated PDPW concerns in their organizations' plans and programs. A GO-NGO Steering Committee whose members represent sectoral concerns meets regularly to keep each other updated on issues and programs about women and explore areas for cooperative undertakings.

Women in Development and Nation Building Act

46. In February 1992, a milestone law, Republic Act 7192 otherwise known as the Women in Development and Nation-Building Act, was passed. The law further strengthens government's commitment to bring women's issues and concerns into mainstream development.

Highlights of Major Sectoral Policy Developments

47. Some sectoral policy and program developments during the five year period include the following:

47.a In employment: the passage of Republic Act 6725 which strengthens the prohibition on discrimination against women with respect to terms and conditions of employment.

47.b In health: passage of Republic Act 6675 also known as the Generics law which protects consumers, majority of whom are women from the exhorbitant cost of medicines; adoption of a new population policy with a concept that goes beyond fertility reduction to include family formation, women's status, etc.; intensified information campaign against AIDS including its integration in the school curriculum, and screening of all blood donors and transfusions, among others.

47.c Prostitution and trafficking of women: passage of Repupblic Act 6955 which outlaws the practice of matching Filipino women for marriage to foreign nationals either on a mail order basis or through personal introduction for a fee and bans advertisements, printing, publication or distribution of propaganda materials; ban on exportation of Filipino domestics in view of reported abuses of employers and selective lifting of ban in affected countries; issuance of Department of Foreign Affairs Order 15-89 which requires all Filipino fiancees of foreign nationals, before they are issued a passport, to attend guidance and counselling sessions at the Commission on Filipinos Overseas to minimize problems related to interracial marriages.

47.d In education: formulation of first set of guidelines for evaluation of textbooks as to their sexist content; formulation and introduction of core messages regarding gender to be integrated in the present textbook revision cycle (done once every six years); formation of a Women's Studies Consortium in six colleges and universities; implementation of a Women in Non-Traditional Trades project to attract and train more women in nine basic trade areas such as automotive, electricity, carpentry, and welding which in Philippine society have always been the domain of men.

C. REMAINING ISSUES AND OBSTACLES

48. Inadequate enforcement and monitoring of implementation of laws. This is linked to a low priority given to women's concerns and compounded by inadequate government resources for implementation and monitoring.

49. Need for more thorough analysis of laws, government policies, forms, procedures and related matters as to their gender impact.

50. Generally low level of consciousness of women's concerns which continuously manifests itself in the tendency of appointing authority to favor male candidates for high level positions, the tendency of women to continue to flock to traditional and low paying jobs, and the tendency of agricultural training and other facilities to be male-oriented.

51. Pervasiveness of sexism and stereotyping in the media and the school curricula.

52. Need for more creative dissemination of collected data and information to various users and the concomitant need to continuously source funds for this. Considering the demands for data at the regional level in support of their planning and monitoring activities, fund sourcing remains a major concern.

PART TWO: PROGRESS REPORT ON EACH ARTICLE OF THE CONVENTION

ARTICLES 2-4

General policy of nondiscrimination as reflected in the Constitution, etc.; adoption of positive measures; establishment of legal protection of women; refraining from engaging in any discriminatory activities; repeal or modification of laws, customs, etc.; adoption of social, political, economic and cultural measures to ensure advancement of women; adoption of temporary special measures to accelerate de facto equality including measures aimed at protecting maternity.

1. The Philippines continues to adhere to a policy of nondiscrimination as embodied in the Constitution, the Family Code, the Labor Code, laws that are being passed and bills that are being submitted to Congress to correct perceived de jure inequalities.

2. Recently, a milestone law was passed which, in effect further strengthens the country's determination to bring women's concerns into the mainstream of development. This law, known as Republic Act 7192 or Women in Development and Nation Building Act directs all government agencies to ensure that women benefit equally and participate directly in development programs and projects. This law also requires government to set aside "a substantial portion of official development assistance (ODA) funds received from foreign governments and multi-lateral agencies and organizations to support programs and activities for women."

Moreover, the law directs all government agencies to "review and revise all their regulations, circulars, issuances, and procedures to remove any gender bias therein." And to ensure compliance, the law further requires all agencies of government to submit a report to the President and to Congress within six months from effectivity of the Act and every six months thereafter.

3. However, the effective enforcement of laws and the persistence of deep-seated attitudes and practices remain a big challenge towards the full de facto equality for women.

Other Policy Developments

4. On 22 September 1989, the Senate passed Resolution No. 77 requesting the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) to assist the Committee on Women and Family Relations in studying, in aid of legislation, the status of women under the laws of the Philippines and recommending appropriate legislation to ensure equality between women and men. This Resolution takes into account the need to review existing laws in order to bring to focus the patent discriminatory provisions against women and to correct the extant situation through appropriate amendment or NCRFW commissioned the conduct of a gender analysis of laws towards a compilation of laws affecting women and a descriptive and historical analysis of these laws. The results of the first part of the study were recently turned over to Congress for consideration.

5. In a related move, the Senate Committee on Women and Family Relations came up with a compilation of proposed legislation now filed in both houses of Congress. The bills cover, among others, increasing maternity benefits; proposing paternity leaves; setting up of day care centers in workplaces; providing penalties for sexual harassment in the workplace; and providing substitute child-minding facilities for children in the community.

6. Senate Bill No. 65 (reported in the 2nd report) was passed and approved as Republic Act 6725 on 12 May 1989, eliminating discrimination against woman workers with respect to terms and conditions of employment. Implementing rules, enumerating possible acts of discrimination that fall under the provisions of the law were prepared by the Department of Labor and Employment.

7. Other recent legal and policy developments that have implications to women include:

7.a The passage of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law or Republic Act 6657, on June 10, 1988 which guarantees rural women equal rights to ownership of the land, equal share of the farm's produce as well as representation in appropriate advisory or decision-making bodies. One issue being pushed by women in agrarian reform is the titling of lands in the name of both husband and wife in law and in practice.

7.b The issuance by Civil Service Commission of Memorandum Circular No. 14 Series of 1989 to enable government workers, especially women, to adopt flexible working hours to help them cope with their dual roles as workers and home managers. For as long as workers complete an 8-hour day work, they could choose a regular schedule of arrival from 7:00 to 10:00 in the morning and departure from 4:00 to 7:00 in the afternoon. (Please see also Article 7).

7.c The designation of Equality Advocates or EQUADS by the Civil Service Commission central and regional offices to look into complaints of discrimination in the public sector on account of gender, political affiliation, ethnic origin, age, handicap, religion and sexual harassment. (EQUADS is also reported under Article 7).

7.d The issuance of Presidential Proclamations 224 and 227 signed on March 1, 1988 and March 17, 1988, respectively, which among others, designate the NCRFW as Secretariat to the annual celebration of March as Women's Month.

7.e The passage of Republic Act No. 6949 which declares March 8 of every year as an official working holiday known as National Women's Day.

The Philippine Development Plan for Women, 1989-1992

8. Concerned with accelerating women's integration into the mainstream and thus helping bridge the gap between law and its implementation, the government adopted the Philippine Development Plan for Women, 1989-1992 (PDPW).

9. The PDPW was approved through Executive Order 348 (EO 348) signed on 17 February 1989. It contains policies, strategies, programs/projects and mechanisms to ensure that gender concerns are considered in the planning and implementation of government programs and services across all sectors.

10. The overall policy thrust of the PDPW is the recognition of the productive role that women already play (i.e., as farmers, etc.) and, therefore, to extend support to make them more productive members of society while at the same time ensuring better appreciation of their reproductive work. Strategies include increasing their access and involvement in development work, as well as institutionalizing support structures for their reproductive role and adopting comprehensive approaches toward sharing in home management.

11. Objectives of the PDPW cut across 6 levels:

11.a To alter the traditional concept of a woman's individual self-worth as being subordinate to man;

11.b To encourage the formation of families that are characterized by a sharing of responsibilities, from parenting and home management to breadwinning and public affairs;

11.c To bring about significant changes in the socio-cultural milieu that perpetuates discrimination against women;

11.d To influence and change the economic system to ensure equal access of men and women to productive opportunities;

11.e To empower women to fully participate in political structures and processes; and

11.f To incorporate the concerns for women's equality and development into the legal system.

12. EO 348 provides a very strong legal mandate for the PDPW. Among others, it authorizes the NCRFW, in coordination with the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) to monitor the Plan's implementation and coordinate its assessment and updating. Moreover, it mandates all agencies of government to create WID Focal Points as the mechanism for Plan implementation.

Extent of PDPW Implementation

13. In compliance with EO 348, the PDPW is being implemented by government. However, the extent or level of implementation varies among agencies. Some are in the process of setting up institutional mechanisms to ensure implementation while others are already deep into implementation of programs and projects.

14. EO 348 clearly mandated the creation of Women in Development Focal Points in government. These are institutional structures tasked to ensure that the PDPW is implemented, monitored and updated in each agency. Eleven of the 19 line departments have established their WID Focal Points.

15. Since the PDPW contains short, medium and long-term strategies and measures to accelerate the development and advancement of women, it is also looked at as an embodiment of temporary special measures to make de facto equality between men and women a reality.

16. In March, 1992 the government had its first ever Cabinet Meeting on Women, where the NCRFW presented to the President a summary of the line departments' accomplishments vis-a-vis the PDPW. Originally , it was planned that each Secretary will report during the Cabinet meeting. However, due to the coming elections, and considering the time it will take all secretaries to present their individual reports, the President ordered the secretaries to submit their reports to the NCRFW for it to synthesize and present to the President and the Cabinet.

Agency reports of accomplishments were generally categorized as actions designed to address women's concern by:

16.a correcting negative biases against women and increasing their visibility in the sector

16.b enhancing women's capability to explore new areas

16.c improving women's situation where they are, either as government workers or as client groups.

(Specific information on the programs and projects reported by the various agencies will be covered in the succeeding articles.)

17. On March 9, 1992, in celebration of Women's International Day, the President reported to some 1,500 woman representatives from GOs and NGOs her administration's accomplishments for the advancement of women. The activity was made more significant with the President, breaking protocol rules, agreed to the suggestion of the NCRFW to form a panel composed of the President herself, two woman senators, the Chairperson of the Civil Service Commission, the first woman labor secretary, and the Executive Director and Chairperson of the NCRFW. The panel answered questions which ranged from personal concerns of women to government's policy approaches. The program was probably interesting enough that the whole activity was later aired by five major television stations.

Influencing Mainstream Development Planning to Become Gender-Responsive

18. Aside from having a separate plan for women (PDPW), the Philippines also adopted the strategy of influencing mainstream development planning through the cooperation of the central economic planning agency and the line departments. From 1989 onwards, the NCRFW has been members of the technical planning subcommittees for development planning. This way, plans and targets of the various committees have been influenced to integrate gender concerns. For the 1993-1998 planning cycle, the major chapters of the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan were submitted to the NCRFW for inputs on gender.

19. In addition, the NCRFW issued Memorandum Circular 92-1 instructing government agencies to ensure that their agency inputs to the MTPDP, 1993-1998 reflect gender considerations. Specifically, the circular suggested the integration of any or all of the following:

19.a general policy statements on women

19.b sex-disaggregation of sectoral or program targets, whenever appropriate

19.c identification of two or three mainstream sector programs where gender concerns will be explicitly integrated.

20. For the present planning period, 1993-1998, the NEDA Central Office and its Regional offices have agreed to integrate the gender concerns in all the planning processes. Thus, there is no more companion plan for this plan period. However, in response to the danger of being lost in the mainstream and for the women in GOs & NGOs to have a continuing reference document, it was strongly suggested both by them and the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM) that the original PDPW be updated with additional chapters (e.g. Macropolicies, Family, Peace), broadened and projected as the 24-year Perspective Plan for Gender & Development.

21. Thus, for the period 1993 onwards, this perspective plan will be the basic reference of GOs from which they will cull out their agenda for women for inclusion in their medium term or 6-year plans. It should be noted that the decision to move towards perspective planning was prompted by the experience gained from the implementation of the first PDPW and the realization that efforts for women take a long time to materialize and therefore, policies and programs need to be laid out over a longer-term perspective.

22. In the area of skills enhancement, the National Manpower and Youth Council (NMYC) started a structured skills training program called Women in Non-Traditional Trades (WINT). The program trains women in non-traditional fields as automotive, electronics, carpentry, furniture and cabinet making, refrigeration and airconditioning, masonry and plumbing. (Please see also Article 10 and 11).

23. Pending with the Senate as Resolution No. 548 is a bill urging the continued recruitment of qualified women in up to 50% of the decision-making positions in the three branches of government.

24. Seeking to extend maternity and other benefits to all women regardless of nature of appointment in the government service, House Bill No. 26658 urges the granting of the 60-day maternity leave, and vacation and sick leaves to woman government workers who are classified as casual, contractual, or emergency employees. (Related developments regarding maternity protection are also reported under Article 11).

ARTICLE 5

Adoption of measures to modify socio-cultural patterns of conduct toward eliminating stereotyped roles for men and women; and ensuring sharing of responsibility in the upbringing and development of children.

Introduction

1. Legal provisions notwithstanding, social and cultural patterns of conduct of both men and women continue to manifest prejudices and stereotypes. The school system, with its text-books, teachers' attitudes and policies in general, still tend to reinforce sexist thinking. Other social institutions as the family, church and media continue to be dominated by ideas and beliefs that are far from espousing equality of the sexes.

Consciousness-Raising Program

2. With this general characteristic of the environment where the PDPW was to be implemented, one of the major program areas of the NCRFW became that of conducting consciousness-raising activities including the development of training modules and materials. In this connection, the government through the NCRFW is presently implementing a comprehensive 5-year gender consciousness-raising program for all government departments across levels of the bureaucracy. This program is being funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) which also gave some C$3.5 million to NGOs for livelihood projects for women.

3. One of the long-term visions of the PDPW is the creation of home environments characterized by equal sharing by both spouses in both the productive and reproductive spheres of life. This concept is therefore translated into policies and programs across sectors of the Plan. This is also one of the central themes of the basic gender consciousness-raising program of the NCRFW which is given across sectoral agencies of government and even to some NGOs.

Other Programs/Projects/Activities

4. The Department of Social Welfare and Development implements a "Parent Effectiveness Service Program" which covers the education of parents on early childhood enrichment, health care, husband-wife and parent-child relationships, and responsible parenthood.

5. Noteworthy is media's supportive response to the issues of gender. During the month-long celebrations from 1989 to 1992 of March as Women's Month, articles, interviews, radio and TV talk shows gave ample attention to the discussion of gender issues, challenging existing stereotypes and limited perceptions on the potentials of women. Children's shows on TV are likewise starting to show gender sensitivity as storylines devoted to encouraging little boys to play with dolls so that they may be able to role play being a good nurturer when they become fathers later are appearing in children's programs. Other regular commercial TV programs have dealt with women's issues and have started to project women positively.

6. Local advertising agencies have also started to pick up and project shared parenting as a positive and realistic value. Noteworthy is the appreciation of big companies (which agree to this type of ads) of the changing value systems related to parenting and home management.

7. With the Philippine Educational Theater Association, the NCRFW commissioned the packaging and airing of six tele-plays essaying the subtle and not-so subtle setbacks that face women in various situations.

8. In November, 1990, the NCRFW in cooperation with the University of the Philippines' Women's Center, conducted a "Forum on Sexism". Noted feminist lecturers from the academe as well as from government and some NGOs presented papers on topics delving into the root causes of sexism.

9. For programs undertaken at the formal education level, please refer to Article 10.

ARTICLE 6

Suppression of traffic on women and exploitation of prostitution

Introduction

1. As mentioned in the second periodic report on the implementation of the Convention, trafficking and prostitution of women have always been prohibited both by Philippine laws and tradition. The problem is dealt with in various provisions of the country's Constitution as well as in other sources of legislations and policies such as the Civil Code, Labor Code and Revised Penal Code (although the three Codes precede the Convention), pertinent city/municipal ordinances and executive issuances.

2. However, amid a backdrop of a precarious socio-political condition coupled with high unemployment, the problem continues to beset the country as it thrived on the increasing poverty and marginalization of majority of the people. Young woman migrants from depressed rural areas who lack the skills to compete in an urban/business-oriented and foreign arena often find themselves in the lowest and marginalized jobs in both the domestic and overseas labor market: as entertainers, sales helpers or maids. As a result, they become easy prey to male employers and customers, and are vulnerable to sexual harassment, molestation and even rape.

3. While available laws/statutes and existing policies and programs before 1988 have contributed to the suppression of trafficking and prostitution of women, the need to introduce new/additional measures has been recognized in view of the varied and oftentimes interrelated factors that contribute to the problem.

Policy and Legislative Measures

4. Significant policies and legislative measures were adopted to address the problems and issues related to trafficking and exploitation of women in the country and abroad.

5. A major policy development is the PDPW, 1989-1992, two chapters of which tackle the problems of trafficking and prostitution. The Plan focuses on three categories of policy approaches to the problem, namely: preventive/intervening, developmental and rehabilitative.

6. The enactment of RA 6955 (filed as Senate Bill Nos. 20 and 25 mentioned in the second report) constitutes a significant legislative measure in curbing the trafficking problem as it outlaws the practice of matching Filipino women for marriage to foreign nationals either on a mail-order basis or through personal introduction for a fee. The law also bans the advertisement, publication, printing or distribution of propaganda materials in furtherance of the practice. This is a measure to protect Filipino women from being exploited by operators of marriage bureaus/pen-pal clubs or foreign nationals.

7. To demonstrate rising concern for the problem, Congress has been active at formulating Congressional bills/resolutions addressing the issues. These bills, enumerated below, are presently in the different stages of review by appropriate Congressional Committees.

7.1 Senate Bill No. 755 (An Act Prohibiting Surrogate Motherhood Including Infant Selling and Providing Penalties Thereof)

7.2 Senate Bill No. 1762 (An Act to Protect Workers and Employees of the Public and Private Sectors from Sexual Harassment, Providing Penalties Therefor, and for Other Purposes)

7.3 House Bill No. 31051 (An Act Amending Article 341 - White Slavery Trade - of the Revised Penal Code to Provide a Deterrent to the Promotion of Prostitution and Increasing the Penalty of Imprisonment and Fine and for Other Purposes)

7.4 House Bill No. 19561 (An Act Regulating the Employment of Workers in the Hospitality Industry). This bill provides for employment requirements, contract of employment, wages and other benefits, insurance coverage and other regulations for the employment of woman workers in the hospitality industry. (This bill, however, is indicative of the government's ambivalence toward the issue of prostitution because while it is considered illegal, regulation is in effect condoning the practice).

7.5 House Bill No. 14604 (An Act Instituting Additional Measures to Prevent the Commercial Sexploitation of Filipino Women and Providing Penalties Therefor)

7.6 House Bill No. 25781 (An Act Prohibiting A Woman Below Eighteen Years of Age From Directly Engaging and/or Being Used as Model for Advertisement or Promotion of Liquor, Intoxicating Drinks and Cigarettes and Providing Penalties Thereof)

7.7 House Bill No. 1790 (An Act Amending Article 2180 of the Civil Code of the Philippines on the Protection of Working Women). The bill provides for the liability of employers for damages caused by their managers who sexually molest, exploit or subject female employees/applicants to lascivious acts.

7.8 House Resolution No. 1689 (Resolution Urging the Department of Foreign Affairs Jointly with the Department of Labor and Employment to Undertake Official Means to Stop the Showing of the Documentary Film on Filipino Japayukis)

7.9 Senate Resolution Nos. 365, 555, and 556 directing the Committee on Women and Family Relations and other relevant committees to inquire/investigate reports on exploitation and abuse of Filipina domestic helpers and entertainers working overseas.

7.10 Senate Resolution No. 420 calling for a review of all laws, rules and regulations protecting the rights, welfare, and health of Filipino contract workers, more particularly Filipino domestic helpers who, by the very nature of their and exploitation.

8. Meanwhile, relevant Senate Committees conducted public hearings/consultations to look into the plight of Filipina domestic helpers and entertainers abroad and arrest the problem of trafficking and exploitation of these workers. Aside from providing concerned legislators with relevant inputs which would aid them in their legislative work, the hearings provided the opportunity for various sectors to synchronize their efforts in looking after the interest and welfare of overseas workers. One concrete outcome of such consultations was the repatriation of hundreds of woman overseas workers stranded in war-torn countries in the Middle East.

9. Cognizant of the nature and complexity of the problem and to demonstrate its will to seriously address the issue, the executive branch of government issued policy directives to suppress the trafficking and prostitution of women.

10. The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) issued Order No. 15-89 which requires all Filipinos who are fiancees or spouses of foreign nationals to attend Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) guidance and counselling sessions before acquiring a passport. The order aimed to minimize problems attendant to interracial marriages and sought to prevent the exploitation of Filipinas in the hands of their prospective foreigner husbands.

11. In March 1988, President Corazon C. Aquino issued a ban on the deployment of female domestics overseas amid mounting reports of exploitation and abuse of these workers. The ban sought to safeguard the welfare of Filipino women and pave the way for better protection mechanisms and other terms and conditions of work. As of November 1992, the ban had been lifted in all but one country. It remained imposed in Kuwait where protection mechanisms for Filipino domestics have not been created.

12. Similarly, amid reports of inhuman abuses and exploitation of Filipina entertainers deployed overseas, particularly in Japan, an exhaustive assessment and review of policies pertaining to the employment of performing artists abroad, with special focus on the enhancement of worker protection, was conducted in 1991. This review resulted in the issuance of a new set of rules providing for the requirements, conditions and procedures by which performing artists may be hired overseas.

13. Among the regulations embodied in the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Administrative Guidelines Implementing Dept. Circular 01-91 dated 13 December 1991 are the following:

- increasing the minimum age requirement for female performing artists to 23 years old;

- pre-qualification of employers by the Philippine Embassy/Consulate in the worksite;

- accreditation of employers, through their licensed agents, with POEA;

- participation of promoters' associations in the accreditation of employers with POEA and the processing of their recruited talents.

14. The newly installed President Fidel V. Ramos responded to the call of some sectors on the issue of "Comfort Women" (or women who were forced to serve as sex slaves for Japanese soldiers during World War II). He issued presidential directives to concerned agencies such as the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and Department of Justice (DOJ) to conduct in-depth studies and formulate recommendations to address the issue, particularly towards encouraging the woman victims to come out so that their cases of exploitation could be documented. He also directed said agencies to negotiate with the Japanese government for compensation packages/damage claims for the woman victims.

15. Numerous reports and accounts of exploitation and abuse of Filipino woman overseas workers resulted in the issuance of a policy directive by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) requiring all entertainers who have passed audition, domestic helpers and nurses applying for overseas work, to undergo the pre-deployment orientation programs specifically designed for such types of workers to increase their awareness and to better prepare them for the social, cultural and job realities in their destinations. This is in line with the agency's efforts to prevent the indiscriminate deployment of woman workers who are unaware of the realities of overseas employment, thereby making them easy preys to exploitation and abuse.

16. The Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration (OWWA) employed more woman officers in its frontline units as well as in its overseas operations (especially at jobsites with predominantly woman workers such as Hongkong, Japan and Greece), in consideration of the peculiar circumstances of woman overseas workers.

17. The Department of Tourism (DOT) stopped using the images of women as come-on in its marketing and promotional activities. It also made recommendations for a stronger inter-agency coordination to address the prostitution problem, viz.:

- improvement of networking and information sharing/system with other law enforcement agencies on the strict enforcement of the ban against "organized sex tours";

- enjoining other allied businesses not registered with DOT to report gender-specific data on tourism program participants-beneficiaries and domestic tourists.

18. To suppress any form of traffic in women, exploitation or prostitution of women abroad, the Bureau of Immigration (BI) has been strictly enforcing the regulation of the POEA requiring any Filipino leaving the country to work abroad as entertainers, domestic helpers, etc. to seek clearance from POEA. The BI has also created an enforcement unit, in addition to the immigration officers assigned at the airport, to detect fraudulent documents.

19. In view of the US bases' withdrawal from the Philippines and cognizant of the resultant problems related to the bases pull out, the Legislative - Executive Bases Council (LEBC) was formed to conduct studies and formulate plans/recommendations to maximize the benefits and minimize negative impact of the bases withdrawal to the country especially the mostly affected sectors such as the woman workers in the rest and recreation industry.

20. The Women's Education, Development, Productivity, Research Organization (WEDPRO), an NGO concerned with women's development, was commissioned by the LEBC to conduct studies and formulate development plans for the affected hospitality woman workers. A major output of the study is a package of comprehensive proposals for the women in Subic and Angeles City (where the US bases used to be located). The proposals include, among others, components on education, livelihood, skills training and organizing.

Programs and Projects

21. A number of significant programs were likewise undertaken by both government and non-government organizations in consonance with efforts to arrest the problem of trafficking and exploitation of Filipino women in the country and overseas.

22. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) provided economic and social assistance to disadvantaged women such as victims of involuntary prostitution, wife-battering, rape, and incest. Temporary houses/shelters for disadvantaged women at the national and regional levels were set up by the agency, benefitting a significant number of women.

23. Moreover, the DSWD conducted a survey on "women in specially difficult circumstances" which include women victimized by involuntary prostitution, to make the agency more responsive to the needs and concerns of its woman clientele.

24. The NCRFW, with financial support from the German government, is set to embark on a project for the establishment of Task Forces (GOs and NGOs) on Special Concerns of Women, such as Prostitution, Violence Against Women, Family and others. The Task Forces will be composed of multi-disciplinary groups of experts who will conduct in-depth studies on the identified concerns of women with the end in view of coming up with a holistic approach in addressing the problems. The groups are expected to formulate an integrated set of recommendations which may take any of the following forms: policies/strategies for consideration by concerned agencies, research proposals, service delivery programs, and proposals for networking.

25. The Third World Movement Against the Exploitation of Women (an NGO mentioned in the second report) has been consistently active in directly addressing the needs of the prostituted women. A major component of their project titled "Solidarity of Women in Distress " (SOLWODI) is the establishment of drop-in centers in Olongapo City (where a US naval base used to be located) and in tourist belt areas in Manila. The centers provide prostitutes with opportunities for alternative lifestyle and livelihood through the following programs:

25.1 literacy program which helps prostitutes become conscious of the injustices done to them by their managers and customers;

25.2 skills training which opens doors to other employment possibilities;

25.3 health education on the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) disease to help the women quit high-risk behavior; alternative health care program; and

25.4 legal education on the rights of women in the country and abroad.

26. Another non-governmental organization that has taken an active role in eliminating forms of sexual exploitation of women is the General Assembly Binding Women for Reforms, Integrity, Equality, Leadership and Action (GABRIELA). Through its Commission on Violence Against Women, it pursues a more holistic approach in addressing the needs of prostituted women.

27. The Commission conducts consciousness-raising programs to educate the women on their human and legal rights, on relevant political issues including the feminist ideology and on health issues. Likewise, it organizes/mobilizes these women so that they will develop the political will to implement projects for themselves.

28. The Commission has also operationalized an on-site center called "Buklod" (Filipino term meaning 'binding') which is GABRIELA's arm in implementing its socio-economic and educational programs. It also maintains a night-care center where mothers working in Olongapo City can leave their children.

29. Law enforcement agencies also stepped up measures to curb the problem on prostitution and other related offenses in the country, particularly in tourist belt areas in Manila.

30. For example, the Office of Manila City Mayor launched in July 1992 a campaign against white slavers or those who maintain prostitution dens in the city, in the guise of nightclubs, sauna/massage parlors and other legally recognized Rest & Recreation (R&R) establishments. As a result, a significant number of closures of such establishments and arrests of operators were made.

31. An issue that was raised by the NCRFW and DOH regarding the campaign is its negative repercussions on the women working in these establishments. While the move to crack down on illegal operations of prostitution houses may reduce, if not totally eradicate the prostitution problem in the city, this campaign, if not coupled with alternatives, would displace and marginalize further the woman prostitutes and other workers in these establishments. The drive will also push the prostitutes to go underground, making the task of monitoring incidence of AIDS and other sexually-transmitted diseases very difficult.

32. Another issue related to the campaign is its limited enforcement only in the city of Manila. While the campaign may lessen prostitution and other illegal activities in Manila, it may, in turn lead to a rise in the incidence of the problem in the other cities of Metro Manila. If the drive is to effect significant results, there is a need for concerted and orchestrated moves among all the local executives of cities and municipalities of Metro Manila.

33. In recognition of the fact that a well-informed, better-educated public is less vulnerable to unscrupulous recruitment practices, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), government body charged with regulating the deployment of workers overseas launched a massive Anti-Illegal Recruitment (AIR) campaign through mass media and a series of regional seminars. The campaign sought to familiarize participants such as the military, judiciary, media, and local government units with peculiarities of illegal recruitment cases. A part of the campaign addressed the information needs of prospective woman overseas workers, particularly those in vulnerable occupational skills such as entertainers and domestic helpers. For several months in 1989, a television advertisement on the illegal recruitment of woman entertainers was aired in response to the growing number of Filipinos, particularly women, who were victimized by illegal recruiters. In addition, information materials such as brochures and pamphlets on illegal recruitment (100,000 copies) and "gabays" (guides) for domestic helpers and entertainers (10,000 copies each) were produced and disseminated to the public.

34. Although the above information dissemination program of the POEA is a welcome measure in the fight against illegal recruitment, the program, particularly the limited number of information materials distributed to the public, is an indication of how minimal the efforts of government are in addressing a major problem such as illegal recruitment.

35. The Pre-Deployment Orientation Program for Entertainers (PDOE), and similar programs for domestic helpers and nurses were launched by POEA, in collaboration with the Philippine National Bank (PNB) and the Women in Development Foundation, Inc., to address the need for more effective and "helpful" pre-departure orientation seminars for those in occupations more prone to abuse and exploitation.

36. The Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration (OWWA), a government agency mandated to look after the welfare of overseas workers and their families established Filipino Social Centers in areas where there were many woman workers such as Hongkong, Singapore, Japan, Greece, and other European countries. This move was aimed at addressing the issue of limited on-site services/assistance for overseas woman workers in view of the special concerns and problems brought about by their deployment abroad.

Remaining Gaps/Challenges

37. In sum, the problem of trafficking and prostitution of women has been continuously addressed by both government and non-government institutions through the enactment of laws and regulations, issuance of policy directives, and implementation of programs/projects relevant to the problem. However, there remain some major challenges and gaps which need to be addressed and needing serious attention by concerned government and non-government entities.

38. Foremost among the challenges related to the problem is the need to review and assess government policies and programs on prostitution towards coming up with more viable and relevant solutions. A critical issue being raised by various sectors, especially the NGOs, is the government's ambivalence toward the issue of prostitution because while it is considered illegal, government exercises regulatory functions, particularly on the employment of hospitality woman workers. Specifically, city governments require these types of workers to undergo vaginal examinations before they are issued work licenses. They are issued "pink cards" as proof that they are free from any sexually-transmitted diseases and are therefore eligible to work.

39. Corollary to the above issue, the GO-NGO network of the NCRFW is already pushing for a discussion/debate on whether or not prostitution should be decriminalized.

40. Another remaining gap is the absence of a government agency solely responsible for addressing the prostitution problem. This results to unsynchronized and "piecemeal" efforts which minimize effectiveness of programs and projects as well as lead to more gaps in terms of service/assistance delivery.

41. In view of the fact that the prevailing economic difficulties in the country constitute the main "push" factor that drive women into prostitution, the need to strengthen and intensify the country's economic recovery program is a major challenge that need serious attention.

42. The Ramos administration has committed itself to the vision of improving the quality of life of every Filipino. Underpinning this development vision is people empowerment in the economic, political, socio-cultural and physical aspects.

43. As contained in the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan for 1993-1998, foremost among the country's development goals is to enable the citizenry, especially the marginalized sectors of society, to have access to the country's economic wealth through access to various forms of resources, control over livelihood systems and possession of various capabilities for development. It is envisioned that with the economic empowerment of poor women and their families, prostitution will be greatly reduced, if not totally eradicated.

ARTICLE 7

Equal rights with men in political and public life

Introduction

1. Philippine law guarantees Filipino women equal rights with men to participate in the political and public life of the country. As reported in the second periodic report, the Philippine Constitution grants to both men and women the following rights: a) the right to vote; b) to run and hold public office; and c) to be appointed to public administration positions. Moreover, there is no law restricting the participation of women in non-governmental associations/organizations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

2. However, despite the above guarantees, the practice of creating women's organizations apart from men's still continues.

Situationer

3. While the law guarantees equality between women and men as regards the right to participate in the political and public life of the country, there remains de facto inequality between the sexes in terms of their participation in elective as well as appointive positions in the public arena. Current trends indicate that men continue to occupy the higher-ranking positions in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government while women tend to concentrate in the middle-and low-level positions of the bureaucracy. This situation may be attributed to the socio-cultural factors which continue to hinder women's full involvement in the country's public and political affairs.

4. Women as appointive officials in both the executive and judicial branches of government continue to lag behind their male counterparts, as evidenced by the following data:

	Indicator	% Female	% Male
a)	Government Post (1992)		
	Members of Cabinet	9.5	90.5
	Constitutional Offices	23.1	76.9
	Bureaus/Offices(1990)	26.7	73.3
b)	Diplomatic Post (1990)		
	Home Office	40.4	59.6
	Foreign Service	42.0	58.0
c)	Judicial Post (1992)	13.2	86.8

(SOURCES: Malacañang Records, DFA, Supreme Court)

5. However, women continue to be slightly more active at the polls than men, as could be gleaned from the data on voters' turn-out rate in the 1987 (Congressional) and 1988 (local) elections. On the other hand, female representation in elective posts in both the national and local levels is below par compared to the men (8.5 % vs. 91.5%).

Policy and Program Developments

6. In consonance with the equity goals called for in the national development agenda and in line with state measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country, the PDPW, 1989-1992 chapter on Services, specifically for the government service sub-sector, provides for the attainment of the following objectives: a) to develop affirmative action plans for women in government, thereby increasing their participation in decision-making positions; b) to institutionalize the integration of positive role concepts about women in various training programs of government departments and instrumentalities; and c) to respond to the problems of particular groups of women in government, such as women in the military, in the rank and file of the civil service, and woman teachers.

7. Other executive and legislative measures were undertaken to effect significant improvements on women's status in the public sector by intensifying efforts to ensure equal participation of women in all levels of government, to encourage women to exercise their political rights and to ensure that women are involved in the policy process.

8. The passage of RA 7192 otherwise known as the Women in Development and Nation-Building Act is a legislative milestone in the pursuit for women's advancement in public life. Specifically, the law accords women equal opportunities for appointment, admission, training, graduation and commissioning in all military or similar schools of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police.

9. The enactment of RA 7160 otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, constitutes another landmark legislation, not only in terms of providing meanigful autonomy to local government units, but also in terms of ensuring that the concerns of women are considered in the legislative process at the municipal, city and provincial levels.

10. As provided under Sections 446, 457, and 467 of the LGC, the "sangguniang bayan" (municipal council),[17] "sangguniang panlungsod" (city council), and "sangguniang panlalawigan" (provincial council), respectively, shall be composed, among others, of three (3) sectoral representatives each, coming from the women, agricultural/industrial, and other sectors including the urban poor, indigenous cultural communities or disabled persons.

11. The Civil Service Commission (CSC), passed Resolution No. 89-463 which provided for the adoption and implementation of a policy program on equal opportunities and equal treatment for women and men in government employment.

12. Another issue that woman workers in government raised during the series of Congresses was the inadequate recognition of women's dual roles as workers and home managers. In response, the Civil Service Commission issued Memorandum Circular #14 in 1989 prescribing flexible working hours in the government service. It is hoped that this directive would help woman workers in government cope with their multifarious roles thereby ensuring their full and sustained participation in the government service.

13. The EQUADS (Equality Advocates) Program was established and institutionalized in the CSC's central as well as in all its 14 regional offices. It is a government mechanism instituted to investigate complaints of discrimination in the public sector on account of gender, political affiliation, age, handicap, ethnic origin or religion and sexual harassment.

14. In its first year of implementation, cases from the different regions of the country, ranging from protest on promotional appointment to sexual harassment, were either settled by the CSC or referred to proper offices for appropriate action, through the EQUADS. It is expected that this mechanism would effect a more gender-sensitive handling of employment cases in the government sector.

15. Some government agencies also initiated efforts to improve women's opportunity to be appointed to previously male-dominated positions. The DOLE effected the appointment of more female top officials and conciliators-mediators. The appointment of women forest guards and tree markers was also recommended by the DENR WID Focal Point to the agency's top management. Other government agencies likewise granted more scholarships and training to their woman employees.

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17 The local councils (municipal, city, and provincial) are the legislative bodies at the the local level.

16. Efforts were also initiated to highlight women's issues in both the public and private sectors as a result of the issuance of Presidential Proclamations 224 and 227 declaring March as Women's Month. Among the activities undertaken was the holding of the annual Congress of Women in Government which served as the regular venue for surfacing and addressing gender issues and raising participants' consciousness of such concerns in government. The Congress also expected that women in government would be able to deal with their woman constituency better if their problems as women in government were addressed. Moreover, round-table discussions among key government agencies were held to follow up developments on issues raised during the Congress.

17. As one of the major underlying factors identified which perpetuate de facto inequality between women and men are socio-cultural in nature, the need to step up measures to raise the consciousness of women in public service is recognized. One activity undertaken was the conduct of an advocacy campaign among woman politicians. Part of the campaign was the holding of a two-day Congress of woman municipal councilors in an effort to help them become better legislators and to prepare them for higher elective and appointive posts. 27

18. Woman leaders from various sectors are also pushing for the development of women's vote and the adoption of women's political agenda. These women met in August 1991 in a two-day Consultation on Women in Public Policy and Politics organized by the NCRFW and the CSC. Participants represented electoral politics, bureaucracy, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the academe.

19. The meeting's main objective was to come up with a framework that will define the direction of women's overall participation in national decision-making.

20. The consultation was followed by a series of developments which resulted to significant gains in broadening women's participation in the country's political and public life.

21. The "Ugnayang Kababaihan sa Pulitika" (Women's Networking in Politics) was formed at the height of pre-election activities of 1992. The group put together a ten-point political agenda for women. This agenda was presented to all the candidates then, especially to the presidential candidates. Then candidate Ramos committed himself to all the identified issues.

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27 A municipality is the second lowest geo-political level in the country, next higher than the barangay or village level.

22. In the area of political participation, the women's agenda sought for a) the appointment of women for sectoral representation in Congress; b) appointment in all levels of policy making bodies based on a quota not lower than the UN quota of 30%; and c) the regular consultation of a broad spectrum of woman NGOs and POs on national policies.

23. Related to the sectoral representation of women in the House of Representatives as mandated by the Constitution, the woman NGOs which came up with a list of 26 nominees, formulated a resolution which pushed for the appointment of women to occupy 50% of the total number of seats for sectoral representatives (or 12 out of 25 seats) in Congress.

24. To strengthen further the legal basis for equality between men and women in the political and public life of the country, a number of bills and resolutions affecting women in government have been filed in Congress, to wit:

24.1 Senate Resolution No. 548 urging the government for the continued recruitment of competent and qualified women in up to 50% of the decision-making positions in the three (3) branches of government;

24.2 Senate Resolution Nos. 468 and 463 calling for the review and re-evaluation of government policies, including the rules and regulations on terms and conditions of employment of women in the government service;

24.3 Senate Resolution No. 905 seeking for the review of the career path of woman officers in the Armed Forces of the Philippines including a determination of existing rules and practices in the military which tend to discriminate or inhibit their professional growth;

24.4 House Bill No. 26658 seeking the granting of a 60-day maternity leave, vacation and sick leaves to woman government workers classified as casual, contractual, or emergency employees or laborers.

24.5 House Bill No. 33669 affording protection to working women, strengthening their rights to employment opportunity in both private and public sectors and strengthening the prohibition on discrimination against women with respect to their employment;

24.6 House Bill No. 24350 granting maternity and paternity leave to married women and married male employees respectively, in the service of the government regardless of employment status and length of service;

24.7 Senate Bill No. 1573 prohibiting discrimination against women with respect to terms and conditions of employment in the Integrated National Police;

24.8 Senate Bill No. 1150 which allots one representative to the women sector in the Social Security Commission;

24.9 House Bill No. 3100 which affords equal opportunity to qualified women to enroll in the Philippine Military Academy and the formulation of appropriate training procedures and guidelines unique and distinct from those of men.

ARTICLE 8

Equal opportunity to represent governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.

1. The Philippines holds no legal barriers to women's participation in international activities/conferences. Filipino women have always been part of delegations to international conferences attended by the government. However, the absence of data could not establish specific types of conferences that women attended (e.g. trade, agriculture) and their roles or level of participation (e.g. as heads of delegations, technical assistants, etc.)

2. A number of Filipino women have also been taking part in the work of international organizations either as full or part-time employees or consultants or as members of committees or working groups. Data are not, however, available on their number, their nature of assignment and which organizations they are part of.

3. Cognizant of the above mentioned data gaps, the DFA issued Foreign Service Circular No. 172-91 which enjoins all Philippine diplomatic and consular establishments to collect, among others, data/information on conferences and activities participated in by women.

4. While there are no legal barriers to Filipino women's participation in activities at the international level, socio-cultural factors continue to hinder their taking active part in the work of international organizations either as full or part-time employees or consultants. For example, opportunities to advance at the international level had been passed up by women due to societal expectations which assign to them the primary responsibility of taking care of the family especially the children and the elderly. Much remains to be done, therefore, in raising the people's consciousness on gender issues and concerns particularly on sharing of family responsibilities between men and women so that both are able to explore their potentials to the fullest.

ARTICLE 9

Equal rights of women and men to acquire, change or retain their nationality and that of their children.

The Constitution of the Philippines ensures fundamental equality between women and men to acquire, change or retain their nationality and that of their children, as amply discussed in the second report.

ARTICLE 10

Equality in education; career and vocational guidance at all levels; access to some curricula; elimination of stereotypes; scholarship opportunities; access to continuing education; reduction of female drop-out rates; sports and physical education opportunities; access to health information including family planning.

Introduction

1. As established in the second periodic report, law and policy in the Philippines generally provide equal educational opportunities to both men and women in the areas specified by the Convention. The various legal and policy pronouncements cited previously remain upheld and most of the different educational programs of government are implemented on a continuing basis.

Situationer

2. In the absence of more recent sex-disaggregated data on education, it could only be inferred that the trends established in the previous report on school attendance, literacy and other indicators on the comparable performance of both men and women continue up to the present. There is even reason to believe that the situation of women is improving because of the recent wave of consciousness on women's issues in the different fields including that of education.

3. This wave of women's consciousness in the Philippines which coincided with the formulation of the Philippine Development Plan for Women, 1989-1992 also provided an opportunity to examine women's educational situation, identify problems and gaps and suggest strategies and programs to resolve these.

4. Pertinent to the provisions of the Convention, the remaining issues confronting women in education to which more recent efforts are being addressed are sexism and stereotyping in school curricula and the persistence of gender tracking of professions or the tendency of women to take on traditional courses.

Policies and Strategies

5. In view of the above concerns, the DECS issued Department Order #48 to officially adopt PDPW, 1989-1992 and integrate gender concerns in the agency's programs and projects.

6. DECS also enunciated policies to address gender issues related to hiring, selection and recruitment, schools' admission requirements and stereotyping in textbooks and instructional materials, among others.

7. Moreover, the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) formulated a set of guidelines for the evaluation of instructional materials. The DECS and Instructional Materials Corporation (affiliated with DECS) has started experimenting, in different learning areas in various grade levels beginning with second year high school, reviewing and editing educational materials using four additional components: a) visibility of both males and females in textual and visual materials; b) role models for males and females; c) behavior and d) language. While still being validated, these guidelines for evaluation of instructional materials are expected to be integrated in the overall set of guidelines being followed by the Department.

Programs and Projects

8. The DECS, through its focal point on gender concerns, has started to seriously correct textbook messages and illustrations against gender biases. Textbook writers, illustrators, editors and some staff of DECS together with the NCRFW have successfully put together core messages on gender and development which will be the basis of preparing basic learning competencies for the different subject areas and grade levels. Efforts have likewise been initiated to firm up specific gender-related guidelines for the regular evaluation of instructional materials.

9. The above program was developed as a result of NCRFW-conducted seminars and briefings with the various levels of DECS officials, from top directors to their curriculum development officers, textbook writers and editors, among others.

10. The creation of a Women in Development Focal Point in the DECS has resulted in the implementation of the following seminars that are directed at integrating gender concerns in the agency's plans, programs and projects:

10.1 Consciousness Raising - This included (1) symposium on women's concerns attended by DECS officials, teachers and staff during the year's celebration of Women's Month, and (2) training on gender awareness participated by curriculum developers, education specialists and Human Resources Development trainors from the regions.

10.2 Training on Gender Responsive Planning participated in by planners and focal point members.

10.3 Focal Point Planning Workshops which identified strategies to integrate gender concerns in the DECS programs and projects.

10.4 Seminar on Gender-Fair Education which reviewed and refined the core messages earlier developed regarding gender concerns and formulated a DECS training plan for its key officials, Human Resource Management Officers (HRMOs) and Regional Directors.

11. The establishment of a Women's Studies Consortium among six major universities, namely: St. Scholastica's College, Philippine Women's University, Miriam College Foundation, University of the Philippines, De la Salle University, and Ateneo University is expected to contribute to the hastened development of women's studies as a field of study, thus, also accelerating changes in socio-cultural conduct of the people. The Consortium's activities include the offering of a basic course and cognate on gender issues; cross-cultural course on gender issues; publications program; library collection; outreach service to community organizations; periodic seminars and sensitivity training; pool of faculty and researchers who compose a network for joint undertakings and occasional special courses.

12. One program of government to overcome gender tracking of professions is the implementation by the National Manpower and Youth Council (NMYC) of the Women in Non-traditional Trades (WINT) project. WINT is aimed at training and involving women in nine non-traditional courses, to wit: automotive, refrigeration and airconditioning, electricity, welding, plumbing, masonry, carpentry, footwear and leather-good manufacturing, and repair and maintenance of office equipment. Among the important components of the project include entrepreneurial development training offered to WINT graduates to provide them self-employment and training of female instructors aimed at improving their teaching skills.

12.1 The project is being piloted in Southern Tagalog and Central Mindanao regions with the Interagency Consultative Committee as an advisory group composed of GOs and NGOs assisting the NMYC in the project implementation. The committee aims to generate advocacy of the project in all sectors of society to increase the project's beneficiaries. For 1989, a total of 143 females graduated while 16 female trainors were trained under the program.

13. In addition to the WINT project, another significant program of the NMYC is the institutionalization of Women in Trades and Technology in all NMYC Regional Manpower Development Offices to effectively deliver skills training in industrial trades and technology courses. This move has considerably contributed to the increase in the number of female graduates in said courses.

14. Aside from the abovementioned programs, the NMYC in cooperation with NCRFW has undertaken gender awareness and sensitivity activities through trainings and photo exhibits geared towards promotion of women's concerns in the sector. Among the activities undertaken include gender sensitization of central and regional NMYC key officials.

15. Picking up the WINT Project scheme and improving on the placement-after training aspect, an NGO, the Ayala Foundation, has also embarked on training women in non-traditional fields as welding and other metal-works skills. To ensure that graduates have ready jobs waiting for them after training, this project has established ties with prospective employers, and trains only the exact number of trainees that will readily be absorbed by the cooperating company. The Construction Manpower Development Foundation (CMDF), a semi-government agency, handles the training. The first batch of 15 woman welders trained under the project are now successfully at work.

16. In sum, the education sector has been manifesting considerable recognition of women's concerns in both formal and non-formal education. However, the two prevailing issues of stereotyping in school curricula and gender tracking of professions need more serious attention. Specifically, there is a need to eliminate gender bias of training programs, increase awareness of women and policymakers on gender issues and to muster more government support to implement the sector's programs concerning women.

17. Another related issue is the non-absorption of women trained in non-traditional skills in the labor and employment sectors due to gender biases and traditional notions of prospective employers regarding the requirements of male-dominated jobs which they think would not match with women's skills and physique.

18. In the face of the above mentioned issues, the sector aims to further rectify sexism in the schools, to increase the involvement of women in traditionally male-dominated courses and jobs, to increase consciousness of women on issues concerning them, and to generate sex-disaggregated data necessary in integrating gender concerns in planning, programming and monitoring.

ARTICLE 11

Elimination of discrimination in all aspects of employment; appreciation of marriage and maternity concerns; continuous review of protective legislation.

Situationer

1. As established in the second periodic report, the Philippine Constitution and other laws of the land recognize the role of women in nation-building and promote the employment of women. The Labor Code, Civil Service Code, and Social Security Act, among others, provide for equal access to employment, social security benefits and safe working conditions. However, as with other legal provisions related to gender, enforcement is far from ideal, considering the deeply entrenched stereotypes and prejudices which are particularly evident and manifested in the field of employment. De facto reality for woman workers remain plagued with many issues and concerns yet to be appropriately addressed.

2. A major concern in women's employment remains statistical or the inability of present indicators to capture women's real contributions in production. Nonetheless, available data on the labor and employment situation of women manifest inequalities and issues confronting woman workers:

2.1 In 1990, Philippine population aged 15 and above was estimated at 36.5M. About 2/3 of these were considered members of the labor force. This left about 15.4M non-members of the labor force. Of this number, about 72 percent are females.

2.2 One-half of the population 15 years and over in 1990 are females. Yet, they accounted for only 34 percent of the labor force during the year.

2.3 There is disparity in male and female Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR). Among the males, an average of 87 percent are considered economically active. The average for females is 52 percent, leaving close to half of the female population 15 years and over seemingly economically inactive.

2.4 There seems to be a pattern in the male and female LFPR by age groups. While the female LFPR is highest in the 25-44 age group, it is lowest at ages 15-24.

2.5 Across all ages, females have consistently lower employment rates than males. Consequently, females have higher unemployment rates than males. Male-female differences in unemployment rates are most pronounced at ages 25-44 which are considered to be the childbearing age for women.

2.6 Female workers tend to be better educated than their male counterparts as 24 percent of them have college education compared to 17 percent for males. Feminists analyze this data to mean that women tend to get more education to be able to compete with men for limited employment opportunities.

2.7 A big proportion of employed males and females are own-account, and wage and salary workers. However, higher figures can be noted for males than females. Also, nearly one-quarter of employed females are unpaid family workers (21%) compared to 10 percent for males.

2.8 The Agriculture, Sales and Service sectors are the major employers of women with more than 2/3 of them in these occupation groups.

2.9 Relative to male workers, employed females dominate two major industry groups: the wholesale and retail trade group and the community, social and personal services group.

2.10 Among all employed females, majority are in Agriculture, Services, and Trade industry groups. The highest percentage is found in Agriculture (32.4%).

2.11 Females comprise nearly half (40.6%) of the total overseas contract workers. Majority of them are service workers (59.2%). On the other hand, a sizeable percent of males are production, process workers, transport operators and laborers (60.4%).

2.12 In the informal sector, women continue to be mainly involved as vendors and hawkers, small-store operators, traders, service workers (laundry women, beauticians, manicurists, domestic helpers) and sub-contractors (garments, embroidery, etc.)

Policy Developments

3. Three chapters of the PDPW, namely, Industry and Trade, Industrial Relations and Services address the employment concerns of women across industry groups. Policies and strategies identified revolve around strengthening or making more effective the existing policies related to the specific provisions of this Article such as improving selection or screening processes for employment, adopting appropriate training and retraining programs for women and improving work conditions.

4. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) adopted the employment concerns of the PDPW as one of its agenda for social justice for the period 1990-1992. More specifically the DOLE identified 3 priority areas of concern of woman workers, namely: equal employment opportunity, sexual harassment and women in the informal sector. In this connection, Committees for each area of concern have been created to formulate and implement appropriate policies, plans and programs.

5. In this connection, the DOLE issued Administrative Order #71, Series of 1991 mandating all bureaus, offices and attached agencies of DOLE to adhere to the principle of equal employment opportunity (EEO). This principle, rather than protectionism, is now being used to review and update their programs and projects for working women.

6. To further ensure continuous coordination of efforts related to the concerns of women in the labor front, an additional commissioner from the DOLE has been appointed to the NCRFW Board of Commissioners. Incidentally, this Commissioner is the country's first ever secretary of labor who is a woman.

7. Successfully focusing attention on the need to eliminate discrimination against woman workers with respect to terms and conditions of employment, Republic Act 6725 was passed in 1989. Implementing guidelines for this law were prepared by the DOLE and were approved and adopted on January 16, 1990.

8. The DOLE, being the government agency charged with the periodic review of protective legislation, also prepared a proposal for the partial revision of the ILO Nightwork Convention. The proposal recommends for the limitation of the prohibition against nightwork to specific groups of women such as pregnant and lactating mothers, women below 18 years of age, working mothers with children aged below one year and not to women in general. In a related development, House Bill No. 2476 was filed in Congress calling for the same modifications.

9. The DOLE has also issued Department Order No. 5, s. 1992 (Amendatory Rule XIV of the Implementing Rules Book III of the Labor Code on the Employment of Homeworkers) to ensure that homeworkers are given the minimum terms and conditions of employment applicable to them in accordance with Art. 154 of the Labor Code as amended.

10. Increasing appreciation of the social cost of reproduction and the need to share both family obligations and work responsibilities between spouses became evident with the passage of Republic Act No. 6972 establishing a day care center in every "barangay" or the smallest geo-political unit of government and instituting a program for total development and protection of

children. In addition, House Bill No. 5374 seeks to establish workplace-based day care centers for children aged 0-6 and provide incentives for management/factory owners in the form of tax deductions. Civil Service Commission has also issued a circular enjoining government offices to put up day care facilities.

11. Another law passed in June 1989 was Republic Act 6727 or the Wage Rationalization Act. This is expected to benefit woman workers since it seeks, among others, to rationalize minimum wage fixing and guarantee the rights of labor to a just share in the fruits of production. One of its salient provisions is the creation of a National Wage and Productivity Commission which shall act as the National Consultative and Advisory Body to the President on matters relating to wages, income and productivity and increase the daily statutory minimum wage of all workers in the private sector by ₱15 to ₱25. There are, however, dangerous repercussions to woman workers of such legislated wage increases due to the tendency of business establishments to retrench or shut down when wage pressures become intractable. And as data over the years have shown, women are the first on the redundancy lists of troubled companies.

12. Certain bills and resolutions are expected to reinforce existing policies for the protection and advancement of women in the labor force. These are the following:

12.1 Senate Bill 1590 - An Act which prohibits gender-based discrimination in advertising for work opportunities

12.2 Senate Bill 179 - An Act which seeks to improve and enhance the working conditions of domestic househelpers

12.3 Senate Resolution 463 urging concerned government agencies to review their policies concerning the professional development of woman government workers

12.4 Senate Resolution 548 urging government to increase the number of women in the decision-making positions in the government up to 50 percent of its total workforce

13. The following bills concerning maternity protection and paternity leaves have been filed in Congress:

13.1 Senate Bill 253 - An Act which eliminates the present limitations on the enjoyment of maternity leave benefits

13.2 Senate Bill 17182 - An Act which increases maternity leave with pay from 45 days to 120 days

13.3 Senate Bill 380 - An Act which provides pregnant woman employees a period of six (6) weeks maternity leave with pay extending for a period of another four weeks at the option of the employees, with pay at a reduced rate

13.4 House Bill 18014 - An Act which seeks to provide adequate maternity protection and opportunities for the enhancement of family relations

13.5 Senate Bill 277 - An Act which seeks to grant paternity leave with pay to married male employees

13.6 House Bill 15235 - An Act which grants paternity leave to all private and government married male employees

14. Bills on sexual harassment have also been filed in Congress (Senate Bills 256 and 1762 and House Bills 574 and 5721). These bills seek to protect working women by defining sexual harassment in the workplace and defining employers' liabilities and corresponding penalties for acts of sexual harassment.

Program Developments

15. The Cottage Industry Technology Center of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) conducted trainings for housewives, mothers, female employees and members of women's organizations to increase their productivity levels. Trainings included, among others, vine basketry, food processing, loom weaving, textiles, flowermaking, stuffed toys making, dressmaking, bag/house decors making and, scrap recycling.

16. Under the Improve your Business Program of the DTI, 30 rural women belonging to micro-enterprise groups were trained in 1989. They were trained to become better entrepreneurs skilled at using resources for maximum income/profit.

17. In 1989, DOLE's Bureau of Rural Workers (BRW) conducted a National Policy Workshop/Consultation participated in by NGOs, GOs, and the grassroots women to identify problems and issues related to woman homeworkers. Workshop results were presented to Congress to solicit support.

18. The Women Workers Employment and Entrepreneurship Development Program of DOLE, seeks to address the needs of seasonal woman workers, specially those with identified capabilities to engage in entrepreneurial undertakings. In 1989, 20 women from Region I participated in various training seminars such as Basic Orientation Seminar (BOS), leadership seminar, Entrepreneurship Development Training (EDT), and Technology/Skills Upgrading and another 20 women from the Cordillera Autonomous Region (CAR) were trained for various skills.

19. Under the Women in Non-Traditional Trades (WINT) Program of the National Manpower and Youth Council, a total of 143 women, composing the first batch of graduates, were trained in various basic industrial trade areas in Southern Luzon and Central Mindanao regions. Of the 61 graduates in 1989, 5 are employed and 48 are now undergoing on-the-job training.

20. Legal literacy, under the Labor Education Program of the DOLE was strengthened and institutionalized for woman workers in the 14 regional labor offices. For 1989, some 1,314 female workers benefitted from labor education seminars.

21. A program called Search for Model Employers of Women was launched by the DOLE in 1989. This program, with no less than the President giving the recognition and awards to exemplary firms who are providing the best package of benefits to working women successfully called attention to the concerns of working women. Highlighted benefits included welfare facilities such as seats and child care facilities; maternity and paternity leaves; equal employment opportunities in terms of promotion and trainings/scholarships, merit increase; and family welfare services.

22. Still at DOLE, the Bureau of Women and Young Workers (BWYW) conducted Women in Development (WID) training programs for DOLE trainors, its own staff, and regional project implementors. All 14 regional chiefs of the Workers Welfare and Amelioration Division and 2 technical staffs from each of the regional offices' Women and Young Workers Unit have received training on gender sensitivity from the BWYW.

23. With financial assistance from the Asia-Pacific Development Centre (APDC), the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) coordinated the implementation of a project entitled "Establishment of Statistical Base on Women Migrant Workers Focusing on Women Domestic Helpers (WIMBASE)." The project accomplished the following:

- developed a set of indicators on women labor migration
- simulated compilation of identified data elements by data producing agencies
- designed a system of data collection, generation, collation and processing

An inter-agency committee composed of the NCRFW, National Statistics Office and other concerned agencies was created to provide technical assistance to the project.

24. Aside from the above-mentioned outputs, the funding agency agreed to the proposal of the NCRFW to use the excess money to finance the implementation of 3 follow-through projects which are expected to pilot test and answer the data needs identified by the original project. Moreover, the projects will help policymakers identify appropriate measures to address the issues besetting the migration of woman workers. The three projects are as follows:

24.1 Review of policies affecting women migrant workers;

24.2 Generation of selected unprocessed data on woman migrant workers at the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration; and

24.3 Study on the changing occupation patterns of woman migrant workers.

Other Research Studies

25. From 1989 to 1991, DOLE conducted a considerable number of research studies for the welfare of woman workers. These studies include: 1) Participatory Action Research on Rural Women Homeworkers; 2) Study on Maternity/Paternity Leave Benefits; 3) Study on Welfare Facilities for Woman Workers; 4) Development and Implementation of a Data Banking and Reporting System on Women and Young Workers; 5) Comparative Study of Local and International Labor Standards Affecting Women and Young Workers.

26. In 1990, DOLE started the implementation of the Women Workers Development Institute (WOWDI) project in some selected regions in the country. The project aims to orient woman workers in the formal sector on labor laws, standards, policies and issues and institutionalize training programs and necessary inter-agency coordination for the enhancement of the leadership skills and productivity of woman workers.

Gaps/Problems

27. Though there are considerable number of livelihood and skills training programs benefitting women, most of these are the traditionally female-oriented and home-based programs, Hence, there is a much-needed review and reorientation of women's participation in livelihood and training programs so that they are also able to participate in mainstream and not only in small-time marginalized programs. Advocacy needs to be actively pursued to encourage women to engage in more varied productive enterprises that are more economically and personally rewarding.

28. Although some steps have been undertaken to ensure the effective implementation of RA 6725 (Prohibition of Discrimination in Work), much more need to be done in terms of formulating more specific guidelines for its implementation. Specifically, the DOLE sees the need to get the cooperation of about ten big corporations who would be willing to study the job descriptions of all their women and men employees towards determining work of equal value among men and women employees.

29. The practice and unwritten policy of preferring to hire males is still prevalent in some companies. Since RA 6725 does not cover the pre-employment stage, efforts should be made to expand the coverage of the law and formulate more effective implementing guidelines to curb such discriminatory practice.

30. Information updates on workers' benefits are reported under Article 13.

ARTICLE 12

Equality in the field of health care; access to health care services including family planning; appropriate and free services pertaining to pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period; adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.

Situationer

1. A comparison of the recent data vis-a-vis those contained in the second report provides an idea of the developments in the health situation of women in the country.

SELECTED HEALTH INDICATORS

INDICATOR	1983		1987	
	RATE	% FEMALE	RATE	% FEMALE
Crude Death Rate *	6.3	41.1	5.8	41.2
Crude Birth Rate *	29.0	48.2	27.6	47.8
Infant Mortality Rate **	42.7	41.3	32.1	42.2
Maternal Mortality Rate **	1.0	100.0	1.0	100.0
Fetal Death Rate **	9.8	—	6.6	—

* per 1,000 population
** per 1,000 livebirths
— no data available

(SOURCE: Dept. of Health. Philippine Health Statistics 1987.)

2. Except for maternal mortality, the data reveal a decline in the rates of birth and death implying an improvement in the overall health condition. Associated with the unchanging rate of maternal mortality is the low coverage of tetanus toxoid immunization among pregnant women. In 1989, only 45.2 percent of the target population were immunized.

3. Anemia is more prevalent among females than males. This is most evident for pregnant and lactating mothers - nearly half of whom are affected by the said disease. Noteworthy is the drastic increase in prevalence among lactating mothers. While the prevalence of anemia modestly declined among pregnant women, more than 100 percent change in the 1982 rate can be noted in 1987 for lactating mothers. On the other hand, goiter is most prevalent among adolescent and adult females as well as lactating mothers.

PREVALENCE OF ANEMIA AND GOITER
(In Percent)

GROUP	1982	1987
Prevalence of Anemia:		
Pregnant	48.6	45.4
Lactating	20.2	50.6
Male	--	33.5
Female	--	41.0
Prevalence of Goiter:	--	--
Adolescents (9-20 years)	--	--
Male	--	0.5
Female	--	4.5
Adult (> 21 years)	--	--
Male	--	0.5
Female	--	7.6
Pregnant	--	3.3
Lactating	--	7.4

-- no data available
(SOURCE: Food and Nutrition Research Institute. National Nutrition Surveys, 1982 & 1987.)

4. In 1983 and 1987, the ten leading causes of morbidity remained basically the same except for the decline in the incidence of all forms of dysentery and whooping cough in 1987. However, a comparison of morbidity rates by cause reveals a rising incidence in almost all the leading diseases.

TEN LEADING CAUSES OF MORBIDITY

CAUSE	1983		1987	
	RATE *	% FEMALE	RATE *	%FEMALE
Bronchitis	678.1	49.0	1,120.6	49.1
Diarrheal Diseases	529.2	41.0	1,031.9	40.9
Influenza	493.6	53.4	863.3	53.5
Pneumonia	237.5	49.0	319.3	49.0
Tuberculosis, all forms	204.5	47.0	285.5	47.0
Malaria	105.9	46.0	211.1	46.0
Accidents			199.5	44.6
All forms of dysentery	90.8	37.0		
Measles	84.1	40.4	142.8	40.4
Diseases of the heart			138.1	43.5
Malignant Neoplasms	49.7	47.0	47.4	47.0
Whooping Cough	33.4	48.0		

* per 100,000 population
(SOURCE: Dept. of Health. Philippine Health Statistics 1987.)

5. In 1989, a considerable decline in the number of government doctors and nurses was observed, thus increasing the ratios of these professionals to total population: 8,825 and 6,292 persons, respectively. Meanwhile, an increase in the number of midwives, rural sanitary inspectors and dentists was reported in the same year.

NUMBER OF SELECTED DOH HEALTH MANPOWER/FACILITIES AND RATIO TO POPULATION

MANPOWER/ FACILITIES	1985		1989	
	NUMBER	RATIO	NUMBER	RATIO
Physician	8,511	1: 6,423	6,804	1: 8,825
Nurse	10,423	1: 5,245	9,544	1: 6,292
Midwife	9,793	1: 5,582	11,508	1: 5,218
Rural Sanitary Inspector	1,933	1:28,282	2,356	1: 25,487
Dentist	1,146	1:47,704	1,589	1: 37,789
Nutritionist/Dietician	634	1:86,228	630	1: 95,313
Medical Technologist			1,432	1: 41,932
Health Center *	1,991	1:27,458	2,073	1: 28,966
Barangay Health Station	7,991	1: 6,841	9,499	1: 6,321

* Including HC with Lying-in Clinic
(SOURCE: Internal Planning Service, Department of Health.)

6. While there was an increase in the number of health centers in 1989, the ratio to population rose to 1: 28,966. On the other hand, the increase in the number of Barangay Health Stations depressed the ratio to 1: 6,321.

Developments

7. Policies and legislations pertaining to health care provision are non-discriminatory to women and some of them are positively oriented towards special health needs of women.

8. An indicator of the priority given by government to health care is the DOH's share in the national budget. From 1985-1990, this percentage hovered around 5 percent, even slightly decreasing in 1990 as the following data show.

BUDGET ALLOCATION, NATIONAL AND DOH
1985-1990

YEAR	NATIONAL	DOH	PERCENT
1985	38,328,941,000	2,425,281,000	4.16
1986	67,409,044,562	3,391,937,000	5.05
1987	79,321,042,000	4,279,527,000	5.40
1988	87,538,862,000	5,044,403,000	5.76
1989	117,012,067,000	6,849,252,000	5.85
1990	156,558,100,000	7,654,968,000	4.89

(SOURCE: Internal Planning Service, Department of Health.)

9. The Department of Health launched the first volume of the Philippine Drug Formulary for physicians which consists of a roster of drugs of acceptable safety and efficacy that meet the community's needs in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases and restoration of health. This is deemed to eventually contribute to the improvement of the health condition of the population especially women.

10. A major development in the health sector is the enactment of RA No. 6675 which is known as the Generics Act of 1988. It seeks to promote, require and ensure the production of an adequate supply, distribution, and acceptance of drugs and medicines identified by their generic names. It requires the use of generic terminology in the importation, manufacture, distribution, marketing, advertising and promotion, prescription and dispensing of drugs. As health care users and providers, women are seen to benefit from the provisions of the new law in terms of reduced prices for drugs of equal efficacy as the more expensive brand names.

11. Also beneficial to women is the passage of Executive Order 365 which increased the benefits (to 90% coverage of actual hospitalization costs) and monthly contributions of Medicare members. (Please see also Article 13.)

12. Directly affecting women and beneficial to the whole society was the enactment of Republic Act 7600. This law aims to provide incentives to all government and private health institutions providing rooming-in and breastfeeding facilities.

13. A recent headway in the health sector was the development of the Field Health Services Information System in the DOH to respond to the data needs of the public health programs including data needs on women. An important accomplishment related to this was the significant reduction in the number and length of forms that field health officers need to regularly accomplish. This resulted to a substantial increase in the amount of time that these officers could devote to actual service.

14. A hallmark in the sphere of health and population is the government's adoption in 1987 of a new population policy. It broadens the concept of population concerns beyond fertility reduction to concerns about family formation, status of women, maternal and child health, child survival, morbidity and mortality, and other demographic concerns.

15. In 1989, the Five-Year Directional Population Plan for 1989-1993 was approved -- the two components of which are Integrated Population and Development, and Family Planning. The Integrated Population and Development Plan aims to support the national government in improving its efforts in achieving consistency of plans, policies and programs by systematically incorporating population concerns into the wider spectrum of development efforts.

16. In the midst of the growing concerns for prevention and control of AIDS, both the government and private sectors formulated policies to forestall the rise in AIDS incidence which afflicts mostly women. These include the integration of AIDS education in existing school curricula at all levels; screening for the AIDS virus of all blood donors and blood transfusions, no mandatory testing except for those already being tested under existing laws; confidentiality of information on the testing, counselling, and care of individuals for appropriate counselling and care; provision of health and social assistance to infected individuals by GOs and NGOs; and conduct of communication campaigns on HIV infection and AIDS as part of an information delivery system integrated into other related programs.

Pending Bills in Congress

17. In addition to the bills stated in the second report, the following have been filed in Congress which support the goal of improving the health status of women.

> 17.1 "An Act Establishing a Women's Community Support Center in Every Depressed Barangay." The centers will provide substitute maternal care for children and will serve as a place where literacy, livelihood and population programs of the government may be implemented.

17.2 "An Act to Protect the Spouse from Sexually Transmissible Disease." This requires the filing by a marriage licence applicant of a medical certificate that he or she is not afflicted with a sexually-transmitted disease which could become a ground for legal separation.

17.3 "Resolution Supporting the Declaration of the Decade for Safe Motherhood (1988-1997) and Directing the Department of Health to Adopt a Maternal Care Program to Address the Basic Maternal Health Care Needs."

17.4 "A Resolution Directing the Appropriate Senate Committees to Inquire on the Social Costs of Artificial Contraceptives, Particularly the Use of Intra-Uterine Devices and of the Injectable Drug Depo-Provera, which have been Disallowed in the United States for Being Injurious and Cause of Death to a Number of Women, and are Being Promoted Under the Present Population Control Program."

17.5 "A Resolution Urging the Adoption of a Plan of Action Endorsed by the Joint Senate and House of Representatives Committee which participated in the 1988 Philippine Parliamentarians Conference on Human Survival Population and Development." The Plan of Action contains the following thrusts: (i) promotion of family planning as a basic human right to ensure safe motherhood, child survival and responsible family formation; (ii) endorsement of the small family norm as a socially desirable goal; (iii) encouragement and provision of support to NGO activities in bringing family planning and related services to the majority of the population.

17.6 Senate Bill 1109 - An Act which increases the penalty of imprisonment for the physicians, midwives and nurses who use their knowledge and skill to practice or assist in the practice of abortion.

Program Developments

18. The different major health programs as discussed in the second report are continuously being pursued by the government while efforts to strengthen them have been initiated through the previously launched Philippine Health Development Program and Child Survival Program. The strategies of the latter include area-based planning with primary focus on safe motherhood and child survival.

19. The new Family Planning program stresses the importance of improving the health conditions of women and children and the involvement of women NGOs in policy formulation and delivery of health services. It continues to promote status of women and well-being of the family through the provision of reliable information and services necessary for families to manage the risks and outcomes of reproduction according to their health needs and fertility aspirations.

20. The program expects that the number of married couples of reproductive age (MCRA) practicing family planning will expand so that Contraceptive Prevalence Rate will increase from 38.0 percent to 45.0 percent in 1993. This expansion is expected to contribute to a reduction of the total fertility rate from 3.85 children per woman in 1989 to 3.44 in 1993, with a corresponding reduction in the population growth rate and the improvement of maternal and child health.

21. A three day Planning Meeting entitled "Towards a Holistic Approach to Women's Reproductive Health" was held in August 1992. With financial assistance from the Ford Foundation, the Planning Meeting was coordinated by the NCRFW and participated in by different GOs and NGOs involved in promoting the reproductive health of women. The Planning Meeting was aimed at assessing various views and perspectives on women's reproductive health and developing a framework towards a holistic approach to Reproductive Health.

22. The DOH, with the technical assistance of other GOs and NGOs involved in women's health concerns, are presently involved in the project entitled "Women's Health and Safe Motherhood Project". Funded by the World Bank, the project aims to (i) develop a new policy and program framework on women's total health and safe motherhood; (ii) review existing relevant projects, policies and activities; and (iii) prepare improved and expanded policies, projects, and activities required by the framework. This project is expected to broaden the traditional view on women's health and give significant attention to other concerns relevant to women's life cycle beyond the maternal and reproductive health care.

Gaps and Problems

23. Notwithstanding these developments in the health sector, women's health status remains poor in terms of maternal mortality, prevalence of anemia and goiter. The inadequacy of health care delivery system and the poor functional health literacy as well as socio-cultural values and practices of women are also problems which need to be addressed. There is also a need to study and take appropriate action on the special concerns of pregnant women with respect to AIDS.

24. Another area of concern which was raised during the last Focal Point meeting of DOH was the recommendation that a review be made of the "delivery system" of all their programs/projects for possible gender issues. In this connection, the need for outside consultants becomes very crucial.

ARTICLE 13

Equal access in other economic and social life particularly family benefits, financial credit and recreation, sports and cultural opportunities.

Introduction

1. As established in the second report, existing laws and policies generally provide women equal access to family benefits, financial credit, recreation and cultural opportunities.

Policy Developments

2. Recent policy developments are expected to benefit poor women in rural areas and working women in the formal (government and private) sector.

3. The enactment of Republic Act 6972 "Establishing a Day Care Center in every Barangay, Instituting therein a Total Development and Protection of Children Program, Appropriating Funds therefore, and for Other Purposes" was a major development for women's welfare.

4. Executive Order 365 was issued to increase Medicare benefits from a ceiling of ₱1000 to ₱2000 starting January 1991; to ₱2500 starting January 1992 and ₱3000 starting January 1993. The Executive Order likewise provides for a Health Finance Assistance Program to cover increase in the Medicare benefits.

5. The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS)* increased the monthly pensions of regular retiree pensioners by 10 percent effective January 1989 and raised the minimum monthly pension from ₱300 to ₱400 in 1989 and another 10 percent in 1990.

6. The Social Security System (SSS)* under Resolution 474 (August 1989) increased the monthly pension of members (private employees) by 15 percent and raised the minimum monthly pension from ₱400 to ₱500. It also liberalized rules on availment of dependents' pension for SSS retiree pensioners.

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*GSIS is the government institution in charge of administering the welfare benefits for government workers, while the SSS is for the workers in the private sector. Pag-Ibig is for housing loans and benefits.

7. Certain provisions of RA 7192 or Women in Development and Nation-Building Act give women rights and opportunities equal to those of men in specific situations such as: (i) entering all kinds of contracts; (ii) applying for loans and other credit facilities; and (iii) joining social and cultural clubs. Moreover, Section 8 of the same law provides full-time household managers the opportunity to avail of social security services. Aimed at recognizing the value of domestic work, the law specifically provides that "married persons who devote full time to managing the household and family affairs shall, upon the working spouse's consent, be entitled to voluntary Pag-Ibig* (Pagtutulungan - Ikaw, Bangko, Industriya at Gobyerno), Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) or Social Security System (SSS) coverage to the extent of one-half (1/2) of the salary and compensation of the working spouse. The contributions due thereon shall be deducted from the salary of the working spouse."

8. Administrative Order 142 approved a set of guidelines placing the implementation of government livelihood programs in nine core agencies, among which are the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), and Department of Trade & Industry (DTI). This would mean more organized implementation of government livelihood programs and hopefully will benefit more women.

9. In line with its social welfare programs directed to the socially disadvantaged or poorest of the poor, the DSWD, for the year 1989, reported to have substantially increased the number of direct woman beneficiaries. This has been due to an accelerated training of woman workers and volunteers in 325 multi-purpose cum production centers throughout the country.

10. The DSWD likewise continues to assist family heads and other needy adults including solo parents (mostly women) in line with its Family Welfare Services which covers: Parent Effectiveness, Responsible Parenthood, Family Case Work, Marriage Counselling and Solo Parents Counselling.

11. For its women's welfare program, the DSWD extends self-enhancement opportunities to marginalized women. The program includes social communication skills development, maternal and child care skills development, self-enhancement, among others. A special program of the Department is its support services for women in especially difficult circumstances, i.e., victims of involuntary prostitution, illegal recruitment, physical and sexual abuse. It has likewise set up a National Training Center and Laboratory for Women's Welfare and Development to test/demonstrate social work strategies to improve the situation of disadvantaged women.

12. The government's social security program (GSIS and SSS) paid some ₱6.9 B security benefits to its members in 1989, a 20.15 percent increase over the previous year. Cumulative coverage of both agencies reached 13.17 million persons in 1989, an increase of 5.61 percent over 1988.

13. An office under the Office of the President, the Presidential Management Staff administers a President's Social Fund, from which ₱ 5 million was given to a project called "Livelihood Revolving Fund for Women" in 1991. The project extends small and medium amount of loans for capability building and livelihood projects to people's organization for onlending to woman beneficiaries. The project was meant to experiment on how to reach the poorest among the very poor through their existing networks. Totally run by the NGOs the project's initial report to then President Aquino so impressed her that she released another ₱ 5 million to the NCRFW for onlending to accredited NGOs. The project is now becoming a model to other groups and agencies involved in livelihood activities.

ARTICLE 14

> Problems faced by rural women and their roles in their families' economic survival including their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy; eliminating discrimination against rural women and equality to participate in development planning; access to health care and family planning, social security, education and extension services; participation in self-help groups and community activities; access to agricultural credit and other facilities and adequate living conditions.

Situationer

1. Majority of Filipinos live in rural areas. Thus, most of the major government social and livelihood programs such as the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program and the Countryside Agro-Industrial Development Program are directed towards the development of the rural areas which remain largely dependent on agricultural production.

Policy Developments

2. The recently enacted Women in Development and Nation-building Act or RA 7192 explicitly mandates government agencies to prioritize development projects and programs for rural women that will increase their livelihood and employment opportunities. Relatedly, the implementing guidelines formulated for the implementation of the law strongly calls for the utilization of existing regional institutional mechanisms in the implementation of a gender-responsive regional development planning and programming.

3. The Local Government Code also provides for mechanisms to ensure that women's concerns in the rural areas are properly taken up by Local Government Units through women's representation in the local legislative bodies. Please see related discussion in Article 7.

4. The Department of Agriculture (DA) incorporated gender and development concerns in their National Agricultural Development Plan, 1991-1995 in order to promote the participation and mobilization of rural women in agricultural development.

5. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) issued Administrative Order 4, series of 1991 granting the Integrated Social Forestry Program's Certificate of Stewardship Contract to both spouses making both husband and wife co-stewards of the land.

6. The Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA) of the Department of Public Works and Highways developed a 4-year corporate plan encouraging "women to participate in training activities toward formation and operation of water institutions."

Program Developments

7. The continuing implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) since 1987 has distributed a total of 405,613 hectares of land to landless farmers and regular farmworkers.

8. Cognizant of women's participation in CARP, the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), through their Women in Development (WID) focal points, have at the grassroots level, encouraged the active participation of rural woman Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) in the whole process of project development from project formulation to project monitoring.

9. A woman's agrarian reform beneficiaries' association was organized in several agrarian communities to promote women's organizing and cooperatives.

10. An NGO, the Rural Improvement Clubs of the Philippines, formulated a 5-year development program (1990-1994) directed towards establishing and strengthening a functional network of rural women's organizations nationwide.

11. The DA launched the Livelihood Enhancement for Agricultural Development Program to help farmers set up site-specific, agro-based projects. Its bank-assisted component provides assistance to farmers' organizations in the preparation of feasibility studies while its grant-assistance component assists farmers' groups that need basic support services and aids agriculture projects for which funding has not yet been made available. In 1989, a total of ₱60 million was shelled out for 629 projects under the grant assistance component benefitting some 20,300 members of farmers' organizations.

12. A banner program/strategy of the government for countryside development is the Countryside Agro-Industrial Development Strategy aimed at promoting the modernization and productivity of agriculture and of small and medium-scale countryside industries. At the same time, the strategy provides for direct assistance to address the immediate and critical needs of those belonging to the bottom 30 percent of families. Since women suffer doubly hard in times of extreme poverty due to their traditional roles, this program is expected to improve women's situation in the rural areas.

13. The creation of the Comprehensive Agricultural Loan Fund (CALF) increases women's access to credit. This funds agri-based income-generating projects such as crops/animal/fishery production, processing and marketing, community-based soap making, etc.

14. The President's Social Fund has financed a credit assistance project for poor women called "Livelihood Revolving/Capacity-Building Fund for Women" (was also reported under Article 13).

15. On December 14, 1989 Kalakalan 20 or the Magna Carta for Countryside and Barangay Business Enterprises was enacted into law as RA 6810. This law encourages small-scale business enterprises in the countryside to increase rural employment and income levels. The law also provides a number of incentives to Countryside and Barangay Business Enterprises (CBBEs) in the form of certain tax exemptions, waiver of license and building permit fees and exemption from government rules and regulations in respect of assets, income and other activities connected with the business of the enterprise. Although not directed specifically to women, this program is expected to bolster countryside economy, thus benefitting rural population, including women.

16. Programs specifically focusing on women which were implemented by the Department of Agriculture during the period in focus include the following:

16.1 Training programs for rural women focusing on their participation in farm and home resources management and other agricultural activities like feed formulation and milling, disease diagnostic procedures, meat processing and livestock raising.

16.2 Trainings for woman agrarian reform beneficiaries on human resources development and business management and WID orientation for extension workers.

16.3 Extension of technical and organizational assistance by the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) to woman livestock farmers towards developing their production and marketing skills.

16.4 Livelihood projects for women implemented by the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) on such areas as bio-intensive gardening, plant propagation for ornamentals and medicinals, fruit and vegetable processing.

16.5 Incorporation of gender-specific data and indicators in the Agricultural Labor Survey and the Agricultural Indicator System.

16.6 Efforts have also been made to conduct research and documentation studies on women's role in postharvest activities and train women in preventing postharvest loss.

17. In terms of adequate living conditions, the National Housing Mortgage Finance Corporation's (NHMFC) Community Mortgage Program (CMP) assures woman beneficiaries of the chance to organize and participate in the planning and implementation of housing programs.

18. The Women Advancing Government Action for Shelter (WAGAS), the WID focal point of government housing agencies, launched a low-cost housing design competition that will promote housing projects that are responsive to women's needs. In the process, woman architects who participated in the competition were required to consult with poor woman target-beneficiaries regarding their specific housing needs.

19. The World Bank-funded "First Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project", coordinated by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), has adopted a "Women in Development" approach in its human resource development component. Concretely, this WID approach aims to encourage women's participation in the activities of the Barangay Waterworks and Sanitation Association (BWSA). These activities include orientation and training on the operation and maintenance of water supply systems. However, the agencies responsible for implementing the project has expressed the need for technical assistance to effectively pursue their goal of enhancing women's participation in the BWSA's activities.

ARTICLE 15

Equality before the law, legal capacity as in concluding contracts and administration of property; equal right to mobility and choice of domicile.

ARTICLE 16

Equality rights with respect to marriage and family relations.

Philippine laws covering these two provisions of the Convention were adequately discussed in the Second Report. Such laws which are based on the 1987 Constitution and the Family Code significantly improved women's legal status as they expressly provide for women's equality with men and eliminated many of the discriminatory provisions in the old laws particularly in the areas of marriage, and family and property relations.